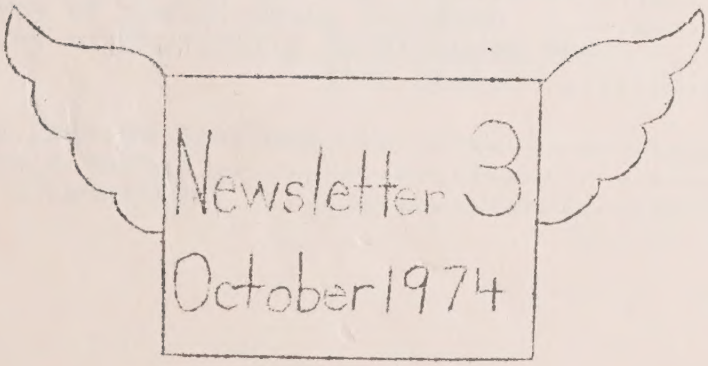
A Naughton

Symbol Co-ordination Committee



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SYMBOL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

The purpose of this newsletter is to publish articles and news items concerning the Bliss Symbol System which utilizes visual symbols to substitute for verbal communication for children without speech.

Subscriptions are $2.00 and may be obtained by writing direct to:

Mrs. Ann Kennedy
Symbol Co-ordination Committee
c/o 95 Courtleigh Boulevard
Toronto, Onatrio, M4R 1K7

Submissions for the newsletter should be sent direct to:

Mrs. Barbara Rush, Editor
Symbol Co-ordination Committee
c/o 64 Magnolia Drive
Hamilton, Ontario, L9C 5T2

CONTENTS

The workshop your Committee held in Hamilton this month attracted 44 people. It proved to be a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and problems with people from many disciplines representing various geographical areas. It is always comforting to find that the crucial problem you feel is exclusive to your setting (and incompetence!), is actually a common and shared experience. During the many discussion groups held throughout the day, we were able to solve a few problems, commiserate on others, and even create a new one or two! For those of you unable to attend, perhaps a brief outline of the programme will give you an idea of the work covered.

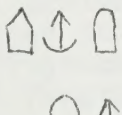
We were welcomed to Hamilton by Dr. Peter Rosenbaum, Medical Director of the Hamilton Cerebral Palsy Centre. His words of encouragement included a few cautionary notes. He pointed out that in teaching symbols, we really have two responsibilities. The easy one is instructing children in the recognition and use of symbols. The importance of communication does not have to be taught to the non-verbal child for obvious reasons. The difficult one is making administrators, non-medical staff, parents, etc., aware of what we are doing and the value of symbols as an alternative to verbal communication. We have to stress the importance that a means of communication has to the global development of a child.

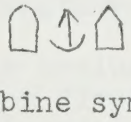
Dr. Rosenbaum also pointed to the need for scientific observation and data collection. He was glad to hear of the research project now being undertaked by the Toronto Centre - see later article. The two cautionary notes called for us not to be over-zealous in the use of symbols with children suffering from various disabilities (i.e. aphasia, autism, the deaf, etc.,) without much prior thought. Also to be careful that if the symbols do not work in certain cases, that we do not throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Shirley McNaughton then brought us up-to-date on the recent happenings in Toronto. You will see from her article in this issue that an extremely useful handbook will be available upon completion of the research project.

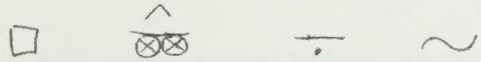
We spent an interesting hour in a practice session making up new symbols. Our Linguist, Oliver Mott, first outlined certain rules.

1. Category must come first. (Exceptions are × ÷ ||=) numbers.

   e.g.  "school" is a <u>building</u> that gives knowledge

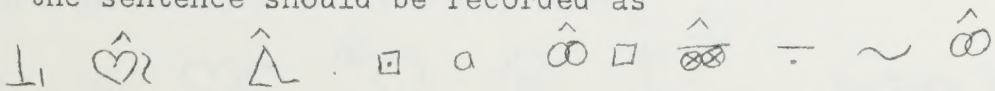
   and not  knowledge given in a building

2. Use of combine symbols aids in clarification and recording output. For example, if a child indicates "submarine" with

    (as one of my students recently did)

   thing to drive under water

   the sentence should be recorded as

   I want to go in a submarine

EDITORIAL

The workshop your Committee held at Hamilton this month attracted 44 people. It proved to be a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and problems with people from many disciplines representing various geographical areas. It is always unfortunate to find that the crucial problem you feel is exclusive to your setting (any "uncomfortable", is actually a common and shared experience. During the study discussion groups held throughout the day, we were able to solve a few problems, commiserate on others, and even create a new one or two! For those of you unable to attend, perhaps a brief outline of the programme will give you an idea of the work covered.

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and not ☐☐☐ Knowledge given in a building

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☐ ☐ (as one of my students recently did)

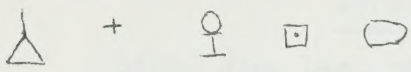
thing to drive under water

the sentence should be recorded as

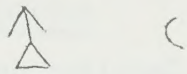
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I want to go in a submarine

During the practice session, sub-groups devised combined symbols for the following: 'jump', 'pregnant', 'library', 'traffic', and 'to ask'. Here are some of the suggestions for'pregnant'.

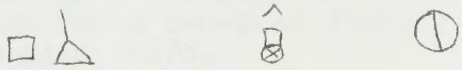


woman with child in body



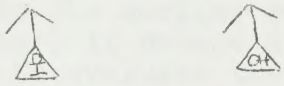
mother to be

mother in future



female thing carrying life

woman before birth



self-explanatory

It was a fascinating exercise and gave us all greater insight into the manipulation of symbols. Not one of these is the right one but the examples illustrate the many ways in which a child will try to indicate an idea for which he has no symbol.

The morning ended with large group discussions on "Family, School and Community Involvement with Symbols." Areas covered were:-

- how do siblings react
- parent and family workshops or training
- how are symbols used at home
- how to interest parents who seem to reject symbols
- community interest
- neighbour involvement
- community activities (cubs, swimming, camp, etc)
- integration of symbol class with other classes
- integration of symbol-users and non-symbol users within a class
- in-service training for school staff
- special problems relating to rural and small town families

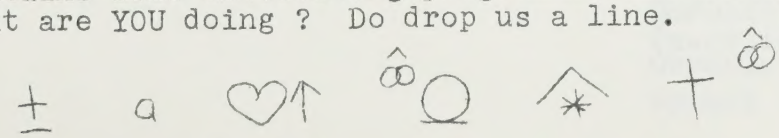
During the afternoon we were able to choose to attend two of the following discussion groups.

1. Symbols and the Mentally Retarded
2. Teaching Aids and Equipment
3. Symbol Syntax
4. Recording Output
5. Symbol Programmes for the Young Child
6. Symbol Programmes for the Adolescent

From the evaluations completed at the end of the day, it would appear that our first workshop was highly successful and we hope to make this an annual event.

... ...

The next newsletter is planned for the end of February, 1975. Deadline for receipt of articles is January 20, 1975. This issue contains some interesting programmes and ideas sent from various centres. What are YOU doing ? Do drop us a line.



Barbara Rush
EDITOR

Up-to-date Report re Evaluation Study of Ontario Crippled Children's Cntr.

Symbol Communication Programme

Since the last report regarding the educational research project at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre there have been several significant developments. Firstly, we have received continued funding from the Ministry of Education for a two-year formative evaluation from September, 1974 to August, 1976.

Secondly, there have been significant changes in the research design. As our planning proceeded within the earlier research framework (outlined in the last newsletter) it became apparent that it would be more useful and informative to evaluate the effectiveness of Symbol Communication directly. It was decided that this could be done through concentrating upon the total population of symbol users rather than through comparing symbol users with those using alternate communication systems.

Information will be gathered through two instructor questionnaires, a parent questionnaire, and through every instructor keeping cumulative record file for each child. The recording materials are being developed with the aim of providing instructors with an easy-to-complete and useful educational record of each child's performance as well as providing data for the research study.

In addition a sub-population will be visited on 3 different occasions for the purpose of interviewing the symbol instructor and obtaining further detailed information.

One objective of the study is to gather information re the effectiveness of the design and composition of particular symbols. Instructors will be asked to refrain from changing symbols which appear on Ontario Crippled Children's Centre vocabularies until they have contacted the Research Directors and the proposed change has been studied and approved. This is the only area in which a limitation will be imposed as a result of the research. In matters of symbol selection, arrangement, nature of output, creation of symbols not on displays, instructos are encouraged to innovate and do what is meaningful for their students. Procedures and techniques which are evaluated by instructors as effective in particular situations will be summarized in the Handbook to be produced at the end of the Evaluation Study (August, 1976).

A further significant development is that Mr. Bliss is to receive a fee jointly from the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre and the Ministry of Education for consultant services.

We are looking forward to meeting with instructors who are participating in the Evaluation study the week of November 12 and of compiling objective data re symbols in a wide variety of settings. Single symbol users and groups of symbol users will be included in the study, in the hope that the Handbook will contain pertinent information for instructions in many different situations.

Shirley McNaughton
Barbara Kates
Co-ordinators,
Ontario Crippled Children's Centre,
Symbol Communication Research Project

News From Rideau Regional Centre, Smith Falls

First off, I would like to apologize to you for not contacting you sooner than this but I'm sure you have had dozens of letters from people starting programs and so I thought I would contact you when my program got structurally sound ... does it ever happen?

Here at Rideau Regional Centre we started our program back in February with the help of the committee from the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre and after assessments we had fourteen Residents ready for the program. Out of this number, one immediately left for Picton and in the last months, one was assessed again and found not to be benefitting from the program and a third was transferred to Kingston. On the brighter side, the program was extended to a full day and in this time four new Residents were added.

As the handicaps of our students in this program are so varied, so too, are the rates of learning. Some of those who have had schooling or other forms of learning experience find that they can comprehend and use the symbols very effectively while those with intellectual retardation problems find it more difficult to grasp and must be taken through the program at a slower level. Nevertheless, I personally feel that the progress so far is enough to justify the program being continued.

This summer, a camp has been set up by a volunteer who has a very specific interest in C.P.s and several of my students have been attending there on a day care basis. The fact that Bliss is used nearly exclusively for all of their communication has not seemed to have limited the basic learning experience of cottage living.

With these students gone from the Centre, I have been able to deal with the remaining students on a closer level and also have been able to supervise the setting up of individual programs where a one-to-one ration is available. All this, and an assessment of the program, have been keeping us pretty busy but I hope to contact you again shortly with a few problems and questions about symbols and their usage, especially dealing with special areas such as autism and audio perception problems.

Thanking you for being there,

True to his word, Hugh sent us a second letter with more news of the exciting happenings at Smith Falls.

At last after seven months I have enough time to sit down and say what has been going on here in Smiths Falls. In February of this year our program was initiated and we started out with the twelve most likely to succeed candidates, since then our student population has doubled through the help of the Bliss resource team and at present we have twenty five residents working at various levels from twelve symbols to four hundred plus.

The youngest in the group is just turning six while the oldest is twenty-five, so I am rapidly trying our various learning tecniques in order to deal with each different group.

Over the summer six of our students were at a special camp run by Ms. M. MaCubrie, a volunteer in the program here who thought that the cottage atmosphere would be very conducive to learning and also an interesting experience for our institutionalized Cerebral Palsied. She will be submitting a synopsis of her program to you shortly so I will let her tell you all about the summer.

One of the projects to be initiated this fall is a socialization night where Bliss students (mostly the adult and teenage ones) and their friends will organize activities and try to stimulate interest in the use of the boards outside the classroom atmosphere. Also we are working on staff training programs and the classroom which was more or less closed will now contain MRc students who will work with the teacher---oh yes finally this fall there will be two of us working on the program----yea help.

Some of the students are at the level now where they are making up very interesting stories and I will send you some of these for your next publication as they show a lot of talent and imagination,especially in the pupils who have never had any formal education.

This is another subject, we are hoping this year to deal with the teachers in the school area directly through visiting their classes and helping to make their understanding of what the student is saying easier and swifter so that the pupil gets the full benefit of the school year.

Hugh Nelson.

News from Virginia Waters Cerebral Palsy ~~School, Newfoundland~~

The children at our school at the moment who would benefit from using symbols are Elaine, aged 14, Marina, aged 13, and Bobby, aged 9. Bobby makes himself understood pretty well for all practical purposes by his own series of gestures, Marina can express herself by writing and drawing, but Elaine, who is athetoid, concerns us very much, as her urge to communicate is so often frustrated because no-one understands. Her situation is complicated by the fact that she lives in a large home for mentally and physically handicapped children where the staff is always changing. However, if we could start her on a consistent system of symbols which she could use in school and with Marina, who also lives at the Home, I think it would be a life-line for her.

I shall be glad to report progress in our use of the symbols.

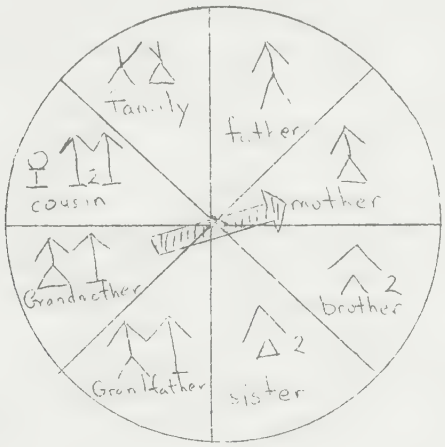
Jane R. Green.

Teaching Ideas from Chicago

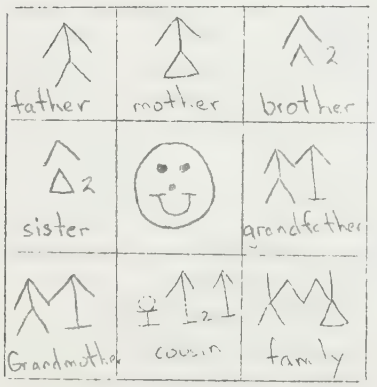
Here at the United Cerebral Palsy Child Developmental Center in Chicago we have begun a small project utilizing Bliss symbols as the medium of expression and instruction for six severely physically involved, non-oral children, I am presently the instructor for the self-contained classroom which is held Monday-Friday from 9:30 to 11:30 am.

We have a lot to share with you, but for right now I'd like to send a description of two games which our children really enjoy. The games are very easy & to make and seem to be a natural, pleasant way to reinforce instruction in the Bliss symbol medium.

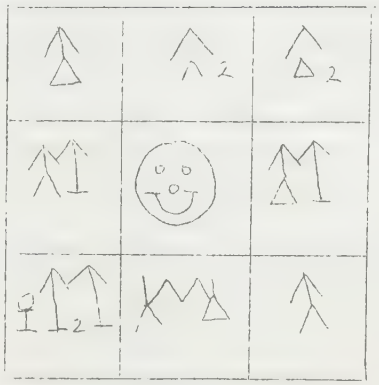
Game: "Family"(Tic-Tac-Toe/Bingo Procedures).



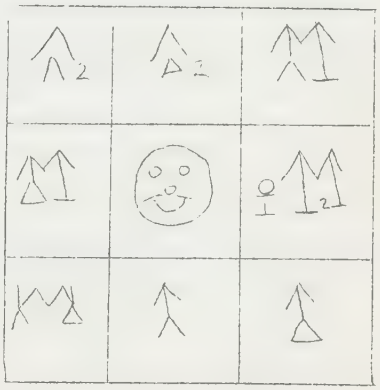
EXAMPLES OF BOARDS:



Child A



Child B



Child C

Game: "Family"(Tic-Tac-Toe/Bingo Procedures) Con't.

To make additional game boards so more children can play, begin with the middle square(△ x)of top row on Child 'C's board, and move to the right; second row begin at left moving to right; third row, same. This will alter the position of the symbols for each successive board you design.

Game: Family (Bingo/TicTacToe Procedures)

Materials: Poster board
a. Large display board
b.arrow
c.smaller game boards for each child.
Colored markers
Small metal clip (like those you can attach notebook paper with;..by placing through the holes and opening the clasps once the clip is through the holes.)

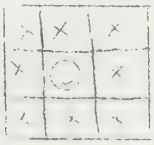
closed.  open. 

This small clip is placed through the arrow and large display board. It will allow the arrow to spin and still hold the two pieces securely.

Procedure: The procedures for playing are similar to either the familiar Tic-Tac-Toe or Bingo Games. Each child has a turn to spin the arrow. (If the child cannot do this himself, the teacher spins for the child). The symbol pointed to by the arrow is the one each child must then find on his own symbol board. The first person to have three in either a horizontal, vertical or diagonal fashion wins the game. (Plastic chips, beans, buttons, etc. may be used to mark the spaces identified on the children's boards.)

Another way to vary the game is to specify a "Shape" to make on one's board. For example:
1) The "protection" or roof symbol - 

2) The entire board, the "Thing" symbol - 



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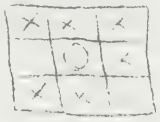
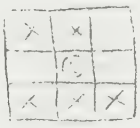
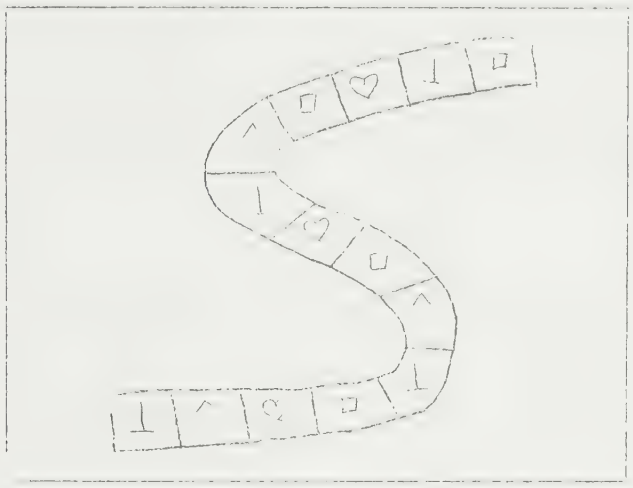
3) The "room" symbol -



4) The "person" symbol -

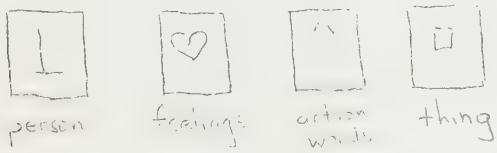


"Follow the Symbol Road..."



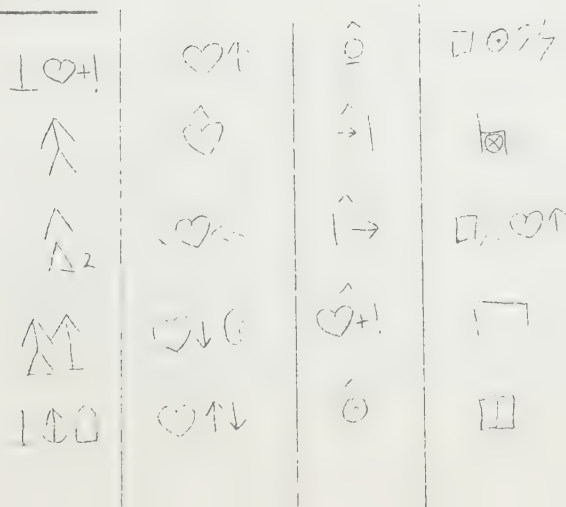
(SIZE: LARGE PIECE OF POSTER BOARD)

FOUR DECKS: CARDS



(Three squares indicated by 3dot is the maximum number one can move on the throw of the dice.)

EXAMPLES:



"Follow the Symbol Road..." Con't.

The number of cards in each deck may be varied in terms of both the content and numbers utilized.

RESPONSE BOARDS:

1) Either 100,200,300-400 Bliss Symbol Displays.
2) Variation of the avove boards.

Game: "Follow the Symbol Road"

Procedure:

A child is selected to go first.
Each child rolls the cube(a plastic block may be used; adherepieces of paper with dots or numerals written on the paper to the sides of the block).
Depending upon the number of dots(or colors used on display Brd.) or (numerals if you choose) indicated on the top surface of the dice, the child's marker (small colored buttons, beans, etc.) is moved that "number" of squares on the symbol board.

Each Square on the board has a "symbol" displayed on its surface. This symbol directs the child and instructor to which deck of cards (see attached drawing) a single card is selected.

Presentation of the card to the child may be one of two ways:

1) Visually present the card to child. The task for the child is then to find the identical symbol on the response board.(visual matching (discrimination).

2) Verbally state, "Show me the symbol for "-----". The task for the child is then for the child to find the correct symbol on the response board without the visual stimulus.

If the child identifies the correct symbol, he is permitted to move that number of spaces indicated on the dice. If the child incorrectly identifies a symbol, he must then await his turn once again.

The game proceeds in this manner till one child, or as many as you have time for, travel the entire board.

At the completion of the game, the child or children who have travelled the entire board may select a reward from a reinforcement menu displayed in Bliss symbols.

Content/Skills Emphasized:

1. Building lexicon in Bliss symbols.
2. Visual Discrimination skills - matching
3. Organizational strategy- "classification" e.g. Person, thing.

I hope these games will be fun for other children learning to use the symbols. I'd sure welcome any adaptations and suggestions for additional activities that you may be aware of. Thanks for your kind attention.

Caron Harris, Instructor
Alternate Systems of Communication

ONTARIO CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S CENTRE
SYMBOL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH PROJECT
ANNOUNCEMENT OF WORKSHOP

DATE: November 20th - 22nd 1974

Starting Time: 9:00 A.M. Wednesday, November 20th.

PLACE: Ontario Crippled Children's Centre,
350 Rumsey Rd.,
Toronto, Ontario, M4G 1R8

FEE: $50.00 per person

This workshop is designed for Teachers, Speech Pathologists, Therapists and Parents inexperienced in symbol use and wishing information about the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre Symbol Communication Research Project. During this three day session instruction will be given on:

a) Symbol construction and use
b) Teaching symbols to children
c) Assessment procedures for selecting children suitable for symbols.
d) Electronic symbol displays and interfaces
e) The manner in which children are using the symbols
f) Brief overview of the Formative Evaluation Study to be undertaken by O.C.C.C., funded by Ontario Ministry of Education.

This workshop is designed for professionals and parents who are involved in symbol instruction and who are not eligible to attend the Workshop which is included in the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre Formative Evaluation Study.

We encourage a team representing different disciplines to come from each centre.

If you are interested in registering for this workshop, please write to Mrs. Ann Kennedy, Team Co-ordinator, Symbol Communication Research Project, Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, 350 Rumsey Road, Toronto, Ontario. M4G 1R8.

Survey of Symbol-Using Children-June 1974

This preliminary survey of Ontario Crippled Children symbol Communication Programme users was conducted for the purpose of obtaining information re the present extent and effect of symbol communication for non-speaking physically-handicapped children. We wish to thank all the instructors who participated. The time and interest given in completing the questionnaires is greatly appreciated. We hope the following summary of our findings will be useful to you and will provide a perspective regarding symbol usage in other settings.

I. SURVEY RESPONSE

Total Number of settings invited to participate..... 60

Total number of settings responding 40
Percentage of responding settings to total number.... 66 o/o
of settings invited

Total number of symbol-using children reported 150

II. TOTAL NUMBER OF SYMBOL-USING CHILDREN REPORTED

Age levels of symbol-using children:	0-5 yrs....	14.....	9.3o/o
	6-12yrs....	83....	55.33o/o
	teen.....	40....	26.66o/o
	20 yrs. &over.	12..	8.00o/o
	not stated.....	66.o/o	
	Total	150	99.98o/o

III. LENGTH OF TIME ON SYMBOLS: of symbol-using children

(i) 6 Mos.&under..	59...	39.33o/o
(ii) over 6 mos. under 1 yr.....	54...	36o/o
(iii) 1 yr. to 1 yr. 11 months....	30...	20o/o
(iv) 2 yrs. & over.	6...	4o/o
(v) not stated.....	1...	66o/o
Total	150...	99.99o/o

Iv. DEGREE OF DISABILITY: of symbol - using children

(i) mild.....	5.....	3.33o/o
(ii) moderate.....	40.....	26.66o/o
(iii) severe.....	54.....	36.0o/o
(iv) needs electronic equipment.	47.....	31.33o/o
(v) using electronic equipment....	3.....	2.0o/o
(vi) not stated..	1.....	66o/o
TOTAL	150....	99.98o/o

V. VOCABULARY LEVEL:

of symbol-using children

(i)	30 symbols and Under	23	15.33%
(ii)	31 symbols -99	38	25.33%
(iii)	100 " -199	39	26.0%
(iv)	200 " -399	19	12.66%
(v)	400 " & over	30	20.0%
	not stated	1	.66%
	Total	150	99.98%

VI. LEARNING CAPABILITY:
of symbol-using children

(i)	Trainable retarded -drill	36	24.0%
(ii)	Trainable retarded - learns quickly	29	19.33%
(iii)	slow learner	26	17.33%
(iv)	average	16	10.66%
(v)	learns quickly	42	28.0%
(vi)	not stated	1	.66%
	Total	150	99.98%

VII. PROGRAMME PLACEMENT OF SYMBOL USING CHILDREN

(i)	retarded	58	38.66%
(ii)	opportunity	6	4.00%
(iii)	academic	80	53.33%
(iv)	other	3	2.00%
(v)	no programme	3	2.00%
	Total	150	99.99%

VIII. MAXIMUM UTTERANCE LENGTH:
of symbol-using children

(i)	1 symbol	26	17.33%
(ii)	2 "	24	16.00%
(iii)	3 "	22	14.66%
(iv)	4 " & over	66	44.0%
(v)	not stated	12	8.0%
	Total	150	99.99%

IX. LEVEL OF SYMBOL OUTPUT:

of symbol-using children	(i) 1 single symbol	25	16.66o/o
	(ii) 2 or 3 symbols (not sentence form)	46	30.66o/o
	(iii) simple sentence	23	15.33o/o
	(iv) full syntax	3	2.0o/o
	(v) random order, over 3 symbols	1	.66o/o
	(vi) type not stated (i)	52	34.66o/o
	Total	150	99.97o/o

(i) This question had a low response due to the inadvertant omission of the symbol level summary sheet which should have accompanied the questionnaire.

X. PARENTAL ATTITUDE

(i)	opposed to symbols	1	.66o/o
(ii)	no support	20	13.33o/o
(iii)	some support	65	43.33o/o
(iv)	strong support	29	19.33o/o
(v)	not applicable	33	22.0o/o
(vi)	not stated	2	1.33o/o
	Total	150	99.98o/o

XI. TEACHERS RATINGS OF SYMBOL - USING CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION ABILITY

(i)	excellent	20	13.33o/o
(ii)	good	42	28.0o/o
(iii)	fair	60	40.0o/o
(iv)	poor	27	18.0o/o
(v)	not stated	1	.66o/o
	Total	150	99.99o/o

XII. TEACHERS ratings of Vocalization change in symbol-using children

(i)	less vocalization	2	1.33o/o
(ii)	no change	94	62.66o/o
(iii)	some improvement	36	24.00o/o
(iv)	marked improvement	9	6.00o/o
(v)	not stated	9	6.00o/o
	Total	150	99.99o/o

XIII. USE OF THE ALPHABET BY SYMBOL-USING CHILDREN

Yes	65	43.33%
No	82	54.66%
Not stated	3	2.0%
Total	150	99.99%

XIV. ARE SYMBOLS USED BY THE CHILD AS A SUBSTITUTE OR COMPLIMENT TO ANOTHER MODE OF COMMUNICATION?

(i) substitute	117	78.0%
(i) compliment	31	20.66%
not stated	2	1.33%
TOTAL	150	99.99%

XV. CHILDREN WITH WHOM SYMBOLS WERE ASSESSED AS INEFFECTIVE

a) TOTAL number in settings of Survey - 18

b) Age distribution of children for whom symbols were ineffective

Under 5	5	27.77%
6-12 years	2	11.11%
Teen	-	-
20 & Over	1	5.55%
Not stated	10	55.55%
Total	18	99.96%

C) Teacher evaluation of cause of failure

	Child No.																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
i) Auditory-visual problems									X									
ii) Retardation	X	X	X					X										
iii) Degree of involvement										X						X		
iv) Learning problems	X	X	X														X	
v) behaviour - emotional				X													X	X
vi) too young	X	X	X	X														
vii) not stated					X	X						X	X	X	X			

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the 66o/o response of the questionnaire, information is given for 150 children. Of this number, 55o/o are between ages 6 and 12; 27o/o are in their teens. The use of symbols with the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten child and with adults is minimal and remains an important area for future exploration.

The population of reported symbol users is still a very new one with 75o/o of the children having spent less than 1 year with symbols. Few mildly disable children are receiving instruction. At the present time, 27o/o are moderately involved children; 36o/o are described as severely involved but able to indicate symbols without using an electronic display. Thirty-one percent of the total population require electronic equipment; this points out the need for attention continuing to be directed toward setting up the means of production of communication technical aids and for further research into interface alternatives.

Information regarding advanced symbol usage remains to be discovered. At the present time, the majority of children (67o/o are using under 200 symbols with the maximum utterance length reported as 3 symbols or more for 59o/o of the children.

It may prove helpful to summarize the remainder of the results by giving a general description of the symbol-using population. Seventy-eight per cent of the children use symbols as a substitute for speech rather than as a compliment to speech. In over half the cases (63o/o) no change is apparent, in their vocalization, but improvement has been noticed for 30o/o of the children. (It is reassuring to note that a decrease in vocalization was reported for only 2 children.) The teachers' ratings of children's communication ability approaches a normal distribution, with most of the children (68o/o) being rated as good or fair, and small numbers rated as excellent or poor. Parents generally support the programme. Only 13o/o give no support and only 1 parent is reported as opposing the use of symbols. Regarding academic placement, the larger number of children are reported in either settings for retarded (39o/o) or in academic programmes (53o/o). It is particularly interesting to note that within the population of symbol-using children whose learning capability has been labelled as trainable retarded, (43o/o of total symbol-using population), 45o/o of these children are reported by their instructors as learning symbols quickly - a characteristic not usually ascribed to the "retarded" child. With regard to the use of the alphabet, a sufficient number of symbol-using children are reported as using the alphabet (43o/o) to indicate that instructors are finding ways of continuing reading instruction and-or utilizing the alphabet to refine communication. This is an interesting area for further investigation and development.

Little information is abailable regarding childfen with whom symbols have been ineffective. Of the 18 children reported as failing to learn the symbols, reasons were not stated for 6 of the children. When reasons were stated, several factors usually were given as contributing to the failure, among them - retardation, learning-problems, age. (see item 14). More detailed information should be sought regarding reasons for failure in the future.

Although this first survey is limited in the amount of information it has been able to collect and organize, it has been valuable in defining the extent of symbol usage, in providing preliminary information regarding the effect of symbol usage, and in indicating areas for further development and exploration. A two-year Formative Evaluation funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education and undertaken by the O.C.C.C. Symbol Communication Programme, Sept. 1974 to August 1976, will continue studying symbol communication in many settings. One of its objectives will be the production of a Handbook for teachers, parents and administrators. Through the collective experience of many instructors, it is hoped that a body of knowledge re Symbol Communication can be made available to all potential symbol users.

Shirley McNaughton, Director
Symbol Communication Research Project
Ontario Crippled Children's Centre.

RESULTS OF ONTARIO SURVEY
REGARDING PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN
WHO LACK FUNCTIONAL SPEECH

compiled by
ONTARIO CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S CENTRE
SYMBOL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH PROJECT
From information provided by

O.S.C.C. DISTRICT NURSES

From O.S.C.C. District Nurses Active Case File, May 1974

1. Number of Non-speaking Children.....359
2. Percentage of non-speaking children within population

	total Number of Children	Percentage of non-speaking children within the population
Total Physically-handicapped population	11,876	3o/o
C.P. and related groups population	4,012	8.7o/o

3. Degree of Physical involvement of non-speaking population:

	No. of cases	Percentage of Total non-speaking population
Mild	18	5.3o/o
Moderate	82	22.8o/o
Severe	258	71.8o/o
not known	1	-
Total	359	99.9o/o

4. Residence

Home	312	86.9o/o
Institution.	47	13.
Total	359	99.9o/o

5. Education Placement of the reported non-speaking population

A) Public School (under 5) ... 4 ... 1.1
(6 and up) .. 7 ... 1.9

Sub-Total 11 3.0o/o

B) Special Education

a) Treatement Centres (Includes academic and opportunity classes)

(under 5) .... 17 ... 4.7
(6 and up) .... 49 ... 13.6

Sub Total 66 18.3o/o

b) Opportunity Classes Outside a Treatment Centre
(under 5) .... 0 ... 0
(6 and up) .. 10 ... 2.8

Sub-Total 10 2.8o/o

c) Other Special Education (e.g. School for deaf, aphasic) Settings
(under 5) .... 6 ... 1.7
(6 and up) ... 33 ... 9.1

Sub-Total 39 10.8o/o

C) Retarded Settings
(under 5) ..... 32 ... 8.9
(6 and up) ..... 93 ... 25.9

Sub-Total 125 34.8o/o

	No. Of cases	Percentage of Total Non/speaking population
D) No School (under 5)	34	9.4
(6 and up)	58	16.2
Sub-Total	92	25.6o/o
E) Home Instruction (no breakdown in age)	3	.8
F) Not Known	13	3.6
Total	359	99.7o/o

1. Pre-School Population (The Educational Placement of the reported non-speaking children under 5 years of age)

Total number of preschoolers - 93

a) Regular Nursery School	4	4.3
b) Treatment Centre Nursery School	17	18.3
c) Other Spec. Education Nursery School	6	6.5
d) Retarded Nursery School	32	34.4
e) Home	34	36.6
Total	93	100.1o/o

7. Primary Modes of Communication for the 359 children in the reported non-speaking population

a) Symbols(iii)	28	7.8
b) Gestures (i)	148	41.2
c) Sign Language	9	2.5
d) Pictures	12	3.3
e) Written Word Board	5	1.4
f) Spelling Board or Typing	12	3.3
g) Partial Verbalization	10	2.8
h) Symbols with another method (ii)	29	8.0
i) Multi Systems - excluding ones using symbols as one aspect	34	9.5
j) None	63	17.5
k) Communication Mode not Known	9	2.5
	359	99.8o/o

(i) Gesture included head movement, sounds, crying, hands, eyes, "noises".

(ii) Total symbols (a) & symbols with another method (h) 57...15.8

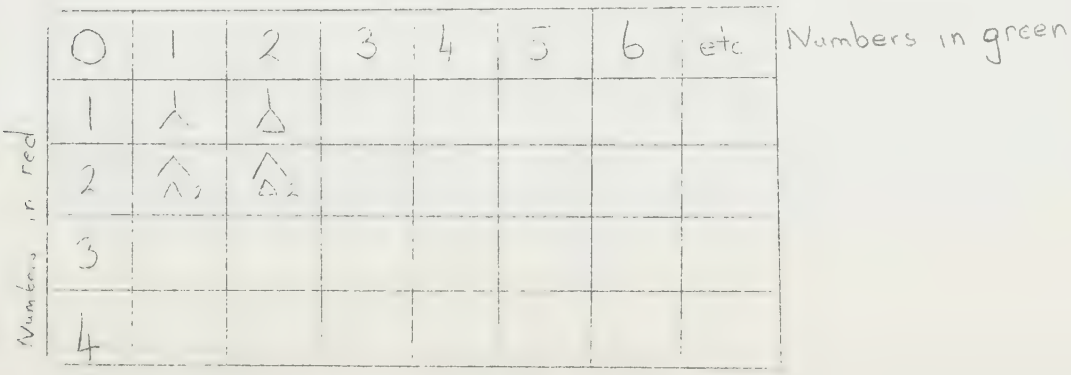
(iii) The number of symbol users herein indicated refers to children known to the district nurse to be using symbols from records, May 1974. It does not include physically-handicapped children in large institutions, for the mentally retarded. For more recent and direct data (July 1974) collected in conjunction with agreement to participate in a Formative Evaluation of the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre Symbol Communication Programme, funded by the Ministry of Education, the number of reported symbol users in Ontario totals 92.

Shirley McNaughton, Director
Symbol Communication Research Project
Ontario Crippled Children's Cntr.

News (finally) from Huemoz, Switzerland

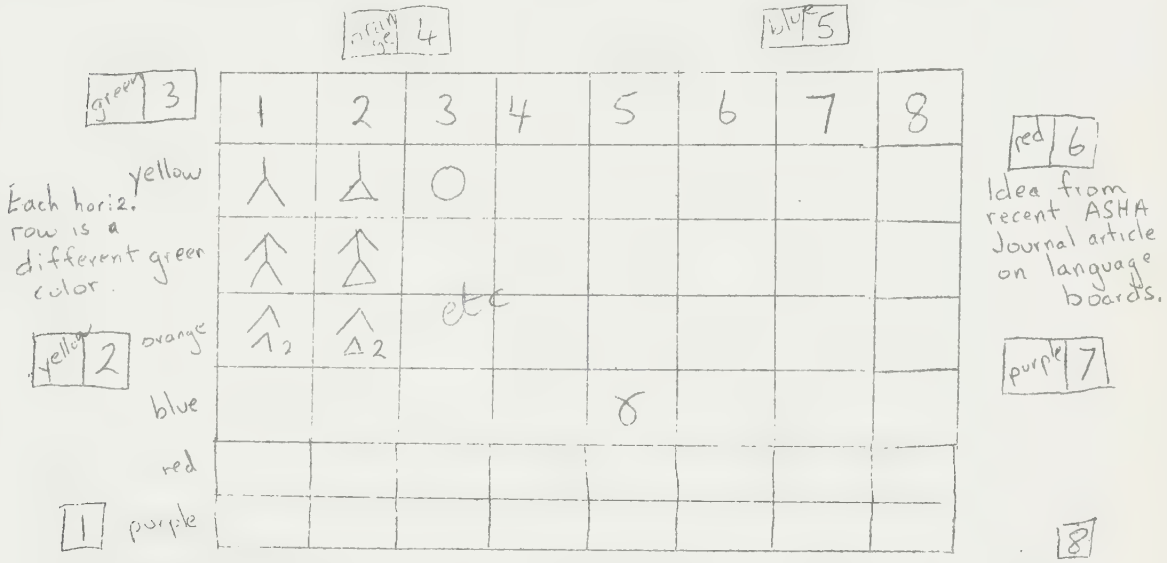
Chalet Bellevue is situated in a Tiny village in the Swiss Alps. It is a residential school and therapy center that is really "home" for fourteen cerebral palsied children ranging in age from seven to sixteen years. As the Speech and Language Therapist her, I have been teaching Bliss Symbols to two boys, ages eleven and sixteen, I had previously initiated instruction with a 13 year-old girl as well but discontinued her program due to extreme physical, mental, and emotional handicaps. Bliss Symbols are truly international at Bellevue as nearly all the children understand French, German, and English.

Jean-Philippe, age 11, is a severely handicapped boy with no speech and no practical motoric ability other than a head nod for "yes" and head turned for "no". He is moderately retarded, has had no academic success, but is quite capable of comprehending conversation and loves to tease. He was first introduced to Bliss symbols on September, 1973 and made very slow and inconsistent progress during the fall. Much of this time was spent on the remediation of basic visual skills (discrimination sequencing, memory, etc.) Because Jean-Philippe is unable to control even a grosspointing response. I first developed a light/buzzer system for symbol use. His symbol board was constructed with rows numbered 0-9 in green across and 0-4 in red down:



News from Huenoz, Switzerland Con't.

Jean-Philippe was then placed in his standing frame, enabling him to have the fullest control possible with two Switchplates, each wired to either a green or red light/buzzer. He then tapped out the number of spaces across on the green plate and the number of spaces down on the red plate to indicate a particular symbol, although Jean-Philippe could operate this system with some success, it was painfully slow and often inaccurate due to motor persevation. Hence he would easily "pass up" the symbol he had wished to communicate. It was clear that this method was not sufficiently effective; therefore, in early 1974 I revised his board to the current 48 symbols and a method of inciaation using only his eyes. Jean-Philippe's board is now constructed this way:

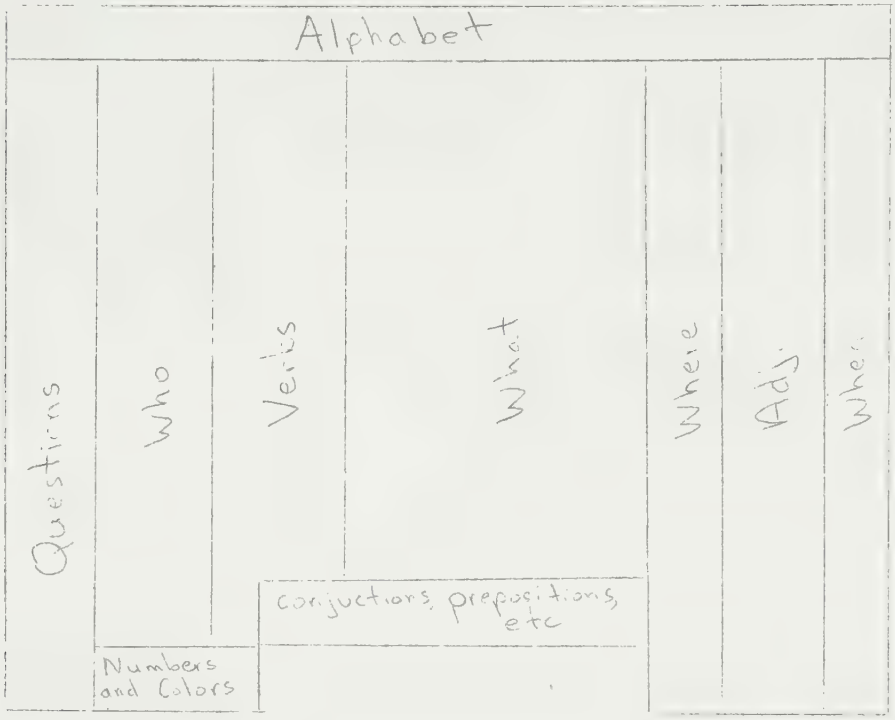


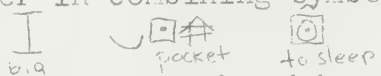
Jean-Philippe, after having found the symbol he wishes to "say" looks at the color and then the number which match up to the particular sy bol (i.e. for airplane he would look at the color blue and then the number 5). This method is faster, easier and more accurate. If I call out the wrong number or color he uses his head to indicate "no". Jean-Philippe rarely initiates spontaneous conversation, but is able to respond to questions appropriately usually, with one symbol. Although severely limited physically and mentally, this method has been successful in giving Jean-Philippe a means of communication beyond "yes" and "no".

Franky, age 16 has no intelligible speech but has limited control for very gross pointing with his left hand. although of normal intelligence, he is far below age-level academically Bliss Symbols seemed an ideal way to give him as much freedom of communication as possible, as quickly aspossible, until his academic skills have improved. Bliss Symbols were introduced to Frqnky in September, 1973. He learned the symbols faster than I could draw them. His Bliss vacabulary has now extended to a board of 350 symbols, arranged in syntactical order (french grammar) and color-

News from Huenoz, Switzerland Con't.

coded according to the Fitzgerald Key. His board is constructed thusly:



Franky initiates conversation spontaneously and can easily while away an hour "talking". He uses a sentence structure, but his grammatical usa e is poor and he often omits verbs. He is never limited by 350 symbols, however, as he is very clever in combining symbols to form new meanings. (for example,  sleeping bag)

when there is a communication breakdown it is usually due to my lack of imagination; never his, lack of logical creativity. In order to improve his grammatical usage, I have created work papers color-coded according, to the Fitzgerald Key on which he must "build" sentences with appropriate sybols i.e.

News from Huenoz, Switzerland Con't.

To lessen difficulties in traveling about the house, Franky's board has been constructed with sides-that fold down and the entire board covered with plexiglass.

Obviously, both of these boys could be helped by electronic equipment. However, because we are somewhat isolated and without the necessary know-how or means, such equipment has not yet been feasible. Despite difficulties in symbol use, there are two young men in Chalet Bellevue who indeed, treasure their new-found communication; The three of us wish to say  to all of you on the O.C.C.C. Symbol Team who have given so much time to the Bliss Project and have shared your discoveries with us.

Karen Culhane
Speech & Language Therapist
Home de Readaptation Bellevue
1861 Huenoz, Vaud
Switzerland.

Penpals Wanted

If you have children wishing to correspond with another symbol-user, perhaps one of the following would interest them. If not, send in the details on your particular child (sex,age,interests, etc.) and we'll insert the information in the next newsletter.

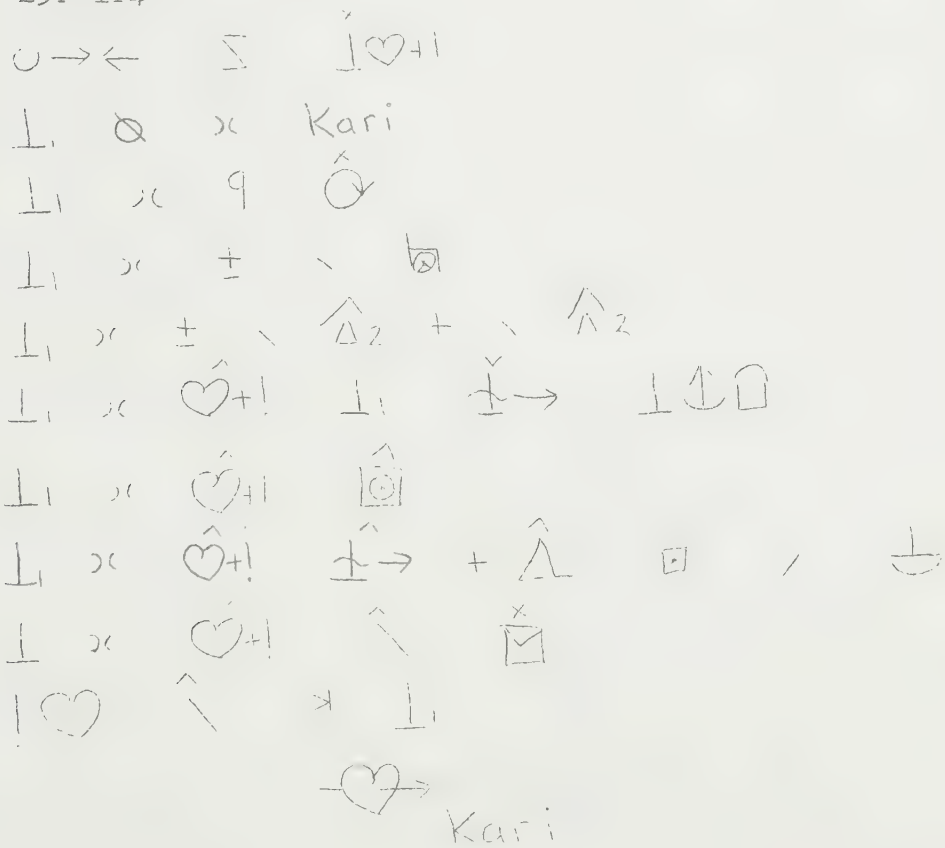
Editor.

. . . . . .

Paul Marshall Cerebral Palsy Centre Group Box 1 Sanatorium Rd. Hamilton, Ont.	aged 11 200 plus symbol vocab. Lives on a produce farm with Mom,Dad, and two older brothers. Loves trucks and farm machinery. Wishes to write to a boy his age or older. (Hates Girls!!)
Linda Langford Cerebral Palsy Centre Group Box 1 Sanatorium Road Hamilton, Ont.	aged 9, 150 plus symbol vocab. Lives at home with Mom,Dad, brother and a sister. Has a pet dog and gerbil. Loves clothes and "pretty things". Wishes to write to a girl-any age.
Franky Von Kronenburg Chalet Bellevue 1861 Huenoz Vaud, Switzerland.	aged 16. Very interested in motor-cycles, rock music and girls. He is easily insulted when associated with "the children" as he considers himself quite mature and would love to write to someone his age or older.

Penpals Wanted Con't.

Jean-Philippe Favre Chalet Bellevue 1861 Huemoz Vaud, Switzerland.	Favorite activity is letter writing. If there is a surplus of students wanting to write to someone in Europe, he could accommodate several. He is an 11 year-old who'd be happy to communicate with a child of any age. He collects stamps as a hobby, loves chocolates, and is a big tease!
Hugh's Dating Service C/O Hugh Nelson, Box 2000 Bliss Programme Smith Falls, Ont.	Wanted-Penpals-all ages- both sexes- at any symbol level.
Alan King Yakima Valley School Selah, Washington U.S.A.	Aged 17. Similar interests to 12-15 year old boys. Enjoys music, arts, and crafts - he makes his art projects with his feet. Lives in institution but visits Mom,Dad, and 6 brothers and sisters during the summer and at Christmas. Enjoys people and has a great sense of humour.
Kari Harrington 16 Jonquil Crescent Markham, Ontario L3P 1T4	Kari sent in her own symbol request.



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